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Committee on Protective Work for Girls



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The War Department
Military
Commission on Training Camp
Activities



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IN GENERAL

More than a million and a half men are concentrated in about eighty military training camps in this country. The problem created by the presence of young girls in the neighborhood of these camps is one which must be squarely faced by the American people, just as it has been faced by the people of other countries in war time. The "lure of the uniform" is more than a phrase; it is an actuality. Girls often lose their heads in a whirl of emotion brought about by these unusual conditions—and therein lies the problem.

The Purpose of the Committee

In response to a growing need, the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities has appointed a Committee on Protective Work for Girls. This Committee, under the Chairmanship of Miss Maude E. Miner, of New York, consists of Mrs. James S. Cushman, of New York, Mrs. William F. Dummer, of Chicago, Mrs. Martha P. Falconer, of

Philadelphia, and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., of New York.

The most important work of the Committee is to extend the idea of the necessity of protection and to secure increased facilities for accomplishing this work. This includes the establishing of a Girls' Protective Bureau with women protective officers who will directly supervise this work in every community adjacent to a camp; and the establishment of places of detention where young girls may be held temporarily. The Committee will also conduct an educational campaign among the mothers and the girls themselves and handle the many reformative questions associated with delinquency. In addition the task of securing and training the large number of field workers required naturally falls to the Committee.

Instead of creating new organizations the Committee has chosen to work through every existing agency. Not assuming itself the immediate responsibility, it seeks to stimulate the activities of local committees and help them in directing the organization of new work.

How the Extension of Protective Work is Effected

DISCOVERING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

First, the cities and towns near the camps are visited by representatives of the Committee who hold interviews and conferences with social workers, public officials and others dealing with the problem. These representatives observe conditions in the vicinity of the camps and in the city itself. They talk with girls in the local jail, station house and place of detention. Conferences are held with the judge, chief of police, sheriff, probation officer, marshal of the Department of Justice, and with the officers in charge of the military police at the camp. In these ways the needs of the city are discovered.

A SURVEY OF THE EXISTING AGENCIES

A survey of agencies and institutions for the protection and reformation of girls in each city is then made. Boarding homes, girls' clubs, maternity homes, public or private reformatories and other institutions are visited. It must be determined whether or not there are women probation officers, or women with police power. The agencies for aiding

girls, such as the Juvenile Protective Association, the Travelers' Aid Society, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are interviewed. When it is determined to what extent local agencies are meeting the needs of each city, a plan is made to show how the existing organizations can extend the scope of their work and to what extent it is necessary to supplement this work by new agencies.

PROCEDURE BASED UPON THE SURVEY

The program in many cities includes one or more of the following:

- a—The establishment of a Protective Bureau.
- b—Securing women protective officers with police power.
- c—Securing a House of Detention for girls, or a place where girls may be detained temporarily.
- d—Securing a woman Probation Officer to deal with girls arrested and brought to the courts.
- e—An addition to the staff of the Travelers' Aid Society.
- f—The official control and supervision of amusement resorts.
- g—Securing improved laws and ordinances for the protection of girls.

A Local Committee Usually the Means of Working Out Details

In some cities, it is recommended that the local committee on camp activities appoint a sub-committee to take direct charge of this work. In a few cities it is urged that a Board be appointed by the Mayor to help in creating a Girls' Protective Bureau, in establishing a House of Detention, and in securing the appointment of a woman probation officer. In others, the desired results may best be obtained by committees operating independently. This Committee will seek to carry out such a program and secure these additional facilities.

Wherever it is decided to establish a Girls' Protective Bureau or a House of Detention, the Committee on Protective Work for Girls will send a worker to the city to help in the organization of one or both of these.

How the Educational Work is Carried On

The development of the educational side of the question is proceeding along various lines. The Committee prints and distributes through various organizations, leaflets and reports, to impress the public with the need of this protective work, and to extend over a wide field, knowledge of the methods used and of the improved laws and ordinances for safeguarding girls.

Trained workers give lectures to mothers and talks to girls to secure their cooperation in giving assistance to other girls and to show them how this work is carried on. Lectures also will be given to groups of men to secure their cooperation, and various other organizations will be asked to help in this.

How Additional Workers are to be Trained

One of the greatest difficulties in protective work for girls is the lack of efficient, trained workers. The training of workers is being promoted as rapidly as possible in several ways. The Committee is arranging for some workers to have actual experience under protective organizations now doing efficient work. Besides this, short courses are being given in schools to provide additional training for women who have had some experience in social work. One such course was held at the New York School of Philanthropy September 4th to 22d. Others are being given in Boston and Chicago.

The workers in camp cities will meet in conferences for the discussion of the problems arising in connection with the protective work and for the better understanding of methods of dealing with delinquents. Conferences of this sort quickly broaden the view, and show definite solutions of the various new field problems.

HOW THE LOCAL COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

The plan of work for the Local Committees differs according to the work already being done by various agencies in the community.

I. ESTABLISHING A GIRLS' PROTECTIVE BUREAU

In many communities this plan includes the establishment of a Girls' Protective Bureau under the Police Department, or under a volunteer committee, to take direct charge of the work. In such cases the staff includes a Director of the Bureau and at least two Protective Officers, all of whom should have police power in both city and county. Wherever possible, these women workers are being employed by the Police Department and are under its jurisdiction. The salary of the Director ranges from \$1,800 to \$1,500; the two officers receive \$1,200 each, or one \$1,200, and one \$1,000. Where it is impossible to secure salaries for these women from the city or county, a volunteer committee or organization is assuming responsibility for their salaries, and requesting that the women be given police power in the city and the power of deputy sheriff in

the county. Although having police power, protective officers seldom find it necessary to make arrests.

In Addition—Volunteers

In addition to the protective officers volunteer Woman Patrols are organized, under the Protective Bureau, to do voluntary work near the camp. These volunteer patrols do not have police power, but carry with them a card signed by the Chief of Police or Sheriff, asking that officers aid them in every way.

Details of the Work of the Bureau and the Patrols

Scouting and patrol work is necessary. Protective officers must be on the streets and in the vicinity of the camp to observe what is going on. Many of the girls found loitering near the camp are taken to their homes and their mothers interviewed. If special Travelers' Aid workers are not provided, the railroad stations, docks and street car terminals are visited. Help is also being given in locating missing girls and making investigations concerning them. These officers visit the amusement parks near the city, the moving picture theatres, dance halls, parks, etc., to see that city ordinances are enforced, and to

discover young girls who are in need of help. Protective officers also aid in the enforcement of laws in cases where young girls are complainants.

Personal Work With Girls

The young girls found by protective officers are being visited and befriended by workers of this Protective Bureau or referred by the Bureau to other organizations. Close cooperation is being maintained with all organizations dealing with girls in the community where the camp is located. Many girls are referred to clubs and classes which are rapidly being formed at this time.

City Ordinances

Many cities already have ordinances for the control of moving picture houses, amusement parks and dance halls. If not already in effect ordinances should be passed and enforced, requiring that girls under sixteen years of age be accompanied by parents or guardians at moving picture theatres; to provide for some censorship of films, and to regulate the dance halls. In some communities it is necessary to urge better lighting of parks and streets and more control of jitneys and automobiles, and additional policing in the county. It may also be neces-

sary to secure ordinances or laws for an official House of Detention and for better methods of dealing with girls and women in the courts. If there is not legal provision for probation and commitment to an institution without the alternative of a fine, effort should be made to secure this.

II. ESTABLISHMENT OF A HOUSE OF DETENTION

A House of Detention should be established and supported by the county or the city, or jointly by both, and should receive city and county charges. Many cities and counties fail to comply with a State law requiring that children under sixteen or eighteen years of age shall be held apart from a jail. If the county or city does not make provision, apart from the jail, for girls who need to be held temporarily during this war emergency, some volunteer committee or association should provide for this. At least \$5,000 is necessary to rent, equip and support such a House of Detention for the first year. This place of detention may be called by some name familiar to the locality or take its name from the Girls' Protective Bureau when the Bureau is located there. Whenever it is possible to develop or extend the work of some already existing home to make it serve the purpose of a place of detention, this should be done instead of establishing a new institution.

In addition to the official House of Detention, it is advisable to have one or more emergency rooms reserved in a boarding home, or private house, for girls who need temporary assistance. Frequently girls come from small towns in search of work or to meet friends, or girls run away from home to go to the camp cities. They become stranded and need to be cared for temporarily. Every city and town should have some place other than a jail to care for girls against whom there is not court charge.

III. SECURING PROBATION OFFICERS

More women probation officers must be secured to deal with the delinquent girls brought into court, and some institutional provision must be made for girls who need reformatory care. Investigations should be made by probation officers to determine the needs of the individual girls, and to discover the best methods of helping them. The importance of more effective probation work is being strongly urged.

The Great Need of Community Cooperation

In carrying out this program for safeguarding girls during war time, the Committee on the Protective Work for Girls must have the cooperation and help of city and county officials and of all organizations and individuals interested in this work. Some cities and local organizations which have women trained for this special work will be called upon to loan some of their workers for service in camp cities; others will be asked for representatives to serve on local committees. If these organizations, individuals and all the protective forces in the communities will now unite in this work, much can be accomplished, not only for this war time, but for all time.

In April, 1917, Secretary Baker appointed the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities under the Chairmanship of Raymond B. Fosdick, of New York. The members, in addition to the Chairman, were Lee F. Hanmer, of New York, Thomas J. Howells, of Pittsburgh, Marc Klaw, of New York, Joseph Lee, of Boston, Malcolm L. McBride, of Cleveland, Dr. John R. Mott, of New York, Charles P. Neill, of Washington, Lieut. Col. Palmer E. Pierce, U. S. A., and Dr. Joseph E. Raycroft, of Princeton University. Jasper J. Mayer is Secretary to the Commission. To supply the normalities of life to nearly a million and a half young men in training camps, and to keep the environs of those camps clean and wholesome, was the two-fold task outlined for the Commission.